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MEETING 1944 EGG AND POULTRY GOALS

Broadcast by Joseph W. Kinghorne, Acting Chief, Poultry Products Division, Dairy and Poultry Branch, Food Distribution Administration, and Wallace L. Kadderly, Chief of Radio Service, in the Department of Agriculture portion of National Farm and Home Hour, Monday, December 6, 1943, over stations associated with the Blue Network.

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KADDERLY: Today--out in Chicago--representatives of the Nation's poultry industry are beginning a three-day conference. They're going to spend some time talking about the 1944 egg and poultry goals. They're going to discuss how to meet but not exceed these goals. And here in the studio today is a man who's been working with the industry on this problem: Joseph W. Kinghorne. He is acting chief of the Poultry Products Division, Dairy and Poultry Branch, Food Distribution Administration. Joe, before I ask you to explain the program for "meeting without exceeding" the poultry and egg goals, I'm going to ask you for some background.

KINGHORNE: Okay, Duke, let's have it.

KADDERLY: Well, we all know that poultrymen have increased chicken and egg production a great deal in the last couple years, but that's not very specific. How much have they increased production?

KINGHORNE: I'd say fully 20 percent since 1941--and even 1941 was a record year.

KADDERLY: So far, so good. Chicken and eggs are important foods. And we want to keep our production at a fairly high level.

KINGHORNE: The only trouble is, if we keep on increasing our production of chickens and eggs in 1944, we might not meet other important livestock goals--like milk, butter, and cheese.

KADDERLY: Because of the limit in feed supplies.

KINGHORNE: That's right. We need to budget our feed supplies. We know how much feed we'll have between now and next September. All of the 1944 livestock goals were planned with feed supplies in mind. We figured out how much feed was necessary to meet war requirements for dairy products...how much for meat...how much for eggs and poultry.

KADDERLY: So your point is...if we were to produce more chicken than the goals call for, we might throw our 1944 production plan out of balance. More meat would mean not enough eggs or milk, perhaps.

KINGHORNE: And since milk and eggs are "fighting foods," we must have enough. So the poultrymen and the hog raisers and other producers are asked to make the very best use of the feed supply...in terms of our wartime needs.

KADDERLY: What are the main points of the program for meeting but not exceeding the egg and poultry goals for the coming year?

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KINGHORNE: There are three of them, Duke. First, let's cull out 10 percent of our laying flocks immediately. Then, let's plan to raise fewer broilers--15 to 20 percent fewer. And finally, let's raise 5 percent fewer farm chickens than this year.

KADDERLY: Hey, wait a minute...not so fast! Let's go into each one of these points separately. The first point was "cull 10 percent of the birds from the laying flocks." Yet the goal for eggs is higher for 1944 than this year.

KINGHORNE: We want at least as many eggs in 1944 as we will have this year...that's true. But, I think most poultry people will tell you, culling flocks doesn't necessarily cut down the number of eggs produced--even at this time of year. Instead, it makes their laying flock more efficient...it means more eggs per hen, and more eggs per pound of feed. It also saves them work...they have a smaller flock to look after, and the laying house is less crowded. Finally, culling the flock may even save producers money...they use less feed, and each pound of feed works harder. Those are some of the reasons farmers should cull 10 percent of the birds from the laying flocks...and do it by February first.

KADDERLY: All right. That covers the first point--cull the flocks. The second part of the program, you said, is raise 15 to 20 percent fewer broilers. That's a big cut in broiler production.

KINGHORNE: It is a big cut, but it can be made over a period of 12 months.

KADDERLY: Even so this adjustment will affect the commercial hatcheries. What does the hatchery industry think about this program, Joe?

KINGHORNE: Well, part of the industry knows it has already over-expanded, and the rest hope to avoid that danger. It so happens, Duke, that last Friday I met with industry members from the 13 northeastern States. What happened there might happen all over the country, unless we do something about it.

KADDERLY: What did happen up there in the northeast?

KINGHORNE: Well, as you know, people want a lot of chicken to take the place of meat on the American dinner table. So the hatcheries expanded...produced many more chicks than they'd ever produced before. The northeast produces large numbers of chicks for broilers, though normally it's not a large hatchery area. But the great demand made the hatcheries hatch more chicks...and soon they had more chicks than they could sell. Leaders of the industry told me they were having to sell larger numbers of chicks at very low prices...and in some cases orders for as many as 25 thousand chicks were suddenly cancelled.

KADDERLY: That's certainly the opposite of about six months ago!

KINGHORNE: Yes, chicks were scarce then. Now, the hatcheries--at least some of them-- have more chicks than they can find a home for. This over-expansion is serious...every surplus chick hatched means one less egg on the market. So cutting down hatchery production of broilers and farm chickens is a way to help meet our goal for eggs. I'm not trying to suggest, Duke, that over-expansion is typical of the whole country...it's not. But it could happen anywhere, and neither we nor the industry want it.

KADDERLY: And that's the reason we're asking the poultry industry to raise 15 to 20 percent fewer broilers, and 5 percent fewer farm chickens.

KINGHORNE: Of course, the farmer will be less affected than the commercial hatcheries...

KADDERLY: Yeah, that's certain...But look--will the reduction in number of chickens mean less chicken meat for civilians in the next few months?

KINGHORNE: No, I don't think so. More chickens will go on the market in the next two months as farmers cull their laying flocks...so adjusting the numbers of broilers and farm chickens won't make much difference. We expect to have a good quantity of poultry meat on the market in the next few months.

KADDERLY: One final point, Joe. About the relation of the poultry industry to other branches of agriculture. It isn't the only industry that's expected to make an adjustment of numbers to feed supply. But I'm sure poultrymen want to know where they stand, in relation to other producers.

KINGHORNE: Of course they do. And what I want to emphasize is that the majority of farmers are taking part in this adjustment...that is, those who produce livestock and livestock products. The goals call for 100 percent of our 1943 production only in eggs and dairy products. Other 1944 livestock goals are down to about 95 percent of this year and hogs even less.

KADDERLY: Well, to summarize: The poultry industry is being asked today to meet-but-not-exceed 1944 egg and poultry goals...by culling 10 percent of laying flocks immediately, and raising 15 to 20 percent fewer broilers and 5 percent fewer farm chickens than in 1943.

KINGHORNE: Yes, Duke, that's right, and I'm sure we can expect 100% cooperation from the poultry industry.

DUMARS: Farm and Home friends, you've heard Joseph W. Kinghorne, acting chief of the Poultry Products Division, of the Food Distribution Administration.

Now let's look at the market report.

